United Nations

Daily Highlights

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WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Secretary-General recommends that UNAVEM II mandate be extended for three months to 15 October to allow United Nations to pursue peace agreement for Angola; estimates cost at $6.35 million; humanitarian flights to resume tomorrow.

+ Secretary-General recommends that Security Council sanctions against Haiti be suspended when Prime Minister assumes office; says country will be on path to democracy by 30 October, when President Aristide returns.

+ Under-Secretary-General for Peace-Keeping says Somalia cannot be allowed to slide back to anarchy; says there is no alternative to disarmament.

+ Norway, on behalf of Nordic countries, tell Economic and Social Council that success is long overdue in Uruguay Round of GATT talks.

+ Secretary-General informs Greece and former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia that Cyrus Vance will assume role of mediator on 1 August.

+ Decolonization Committee hears calls for United Nations intervention to resolve human rights crisis in East Timor; petitioners say Organization should oversee referendum in Territory.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has recommended that the Security Council extend the mandate of the United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM II) for three months to 15 October to allow the United Nations to vigorously pursue a peace agreement. In a report on UNAVEM II dated 12 July, he said he would present proposals to the Council to strengthen the Mission's verification capabilities as soon as a timetable for implementation of a peace agreement had been established. He estimated that UNAVEM II's extension would cost a total of $6.35 million.

The report stressed that it would be "unthinkable" for the the United Nations to abandon Angola given the deteriorating political and military

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situation there. UNAVEM II was an essential factor in efforts to advance the peace process and to provide humanitarian relief. The Mission also helped to prevent the escalation of the conflict in the country.

The Secretary-General said that his Special Representative would continue to act as an intermediary between the Angolan Government and the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), but that a successful peace agreement would ultimately depend on the Angolans themselves.

In a related development, a United Nations spokesman today said humanitarian flights would resume in Angola tomorrow as the result of an agreement between UNAVEM II, President Dos Santos and UNITA's Dr. Jonas Savimbi.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has recommended that the sanctions imposed against Haiti by Security Council resolution 841 (1993) be suspended as soon as a Prime Minister has been ratified by the Haitian Parliament and has assumed office. He made that recommendation in a report on democracy and human rights in Haiti, dated 12 July. The suspension of sanctions had been envisaged in the Agreement concluded by President Jean-Bertrand Aristide and Lieutenant-General Raoul Cedras, Commander-in-Chief of the Haitian Armed Forces, on Governers Island on 3 July.

The Secretary-General said the suspension should be terminated if the parties or the authorities in Haiti failed to comply in good faith with the Agreement. He would report to the Council as soon as President Aristide had returned to Haiti with a view to the indefinite lifting of the sanctions. Verification of the Agreement would be entrusted to the Special Envoy for Haiti, Dante Caputo.

On the subject of human rights, the Secretary-General said the arrangements agreed to by the constitutional Government of Haiti and the de facto authorities concerning the International Civilian Mission to Haiti should remain in effect. He stressed that the provisions of the Agreement would require detailed follow-up, and expressed confidence that Haiti would be on the path to a stable democratic future by 30 October, the date set for President Aristide's return. He went on to ask the international community to provide technical and financial help for the reconstruction of the country's economy and institutions.

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Under-Secretary-General for Peace-Keeping Kofi Annan has said Somalia cannot be allowed to slide back to the anarchy of the recent past. He told correspondents today that it was essential that the criminal elements in the country be rooted out, noting that in recent weeks they had killed some 35 peace-keepers, as well as journalists and Somalis working with the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II).

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Mr. Annan said there was no alternative but to rid Mogadishu of all weaponry. Without disarmament, even a cessation of hostilities could not provide the lasting confidence needed for the rebuilding of Somalia.

Meanwhile, Special Representative Jonathan Howe has said that UNOSOM II will "silence those inciting violence against us" and pursue those responsible for the attack on Pakistani peace-keepers on 5 June and the murder of 4 journalists on Monday. He said yesterday that Southern Mogadishu would remain dangerous as long as General Mohamed Farah Aidid was not in custody.

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Norway has told the Economic Committee of the Economic and Social Council that a successful conclusion to the seven-year-old negotiations of the Uruguay Round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) is long overdue. The Committee was beginning its discussion of development and international economic cooperation in Geneva yesterday.

Speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries, Norway said the failure to conclude the Uruguay Round might indicate that narrow, short-sighted national interests were replacing the pursuit of global welfare. Other countries also called for an early GATT agreement and for an international trade package that would fully address developing countries' needs.

Some speakers noted that many developing countries were struggling to sell products for which prices had fallen and which faced unfair international trade barriers. Meanwhile, those countries were carrying heavy debt burdens and trying to establish democratic systems of government and market economies. The situation was exacerbated by the world-wide recession, they said.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has written to the Prime Minister of Greece and the President of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to say that Cyrus Vance has accepted his request to serve as a mediator between the two countries, according to a United Nations spokesman. He said Mr. Vance, the former Co-Chairman of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia, would assume the role on 1 August.

The Secretary-General recalled that Security Council resolution 845 (1993) urged the two parties to continue their efforts under his auspices to arrive at a speedy settlement of remaining issues between them. He expressed the hope that a settlement could be reached before the commencement of the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly.

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The Special Committee on decolonization has heard several calls for the United Nations to intervene directly to resolve the human rights crisis in East Timor. Petitioners before the Committee yesterday urged the

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international community to use economic, diplomatic and other means to force Indonesia to comply with United Nations resolutions on East Timor and with the principles of the United Nations Charter. They also called for the holding of a referendum in the Territory under the auspices of the Organization.

One petitioner, a Member of the Portuguese Parliament, said the crisis in East Timor should not be seen as a conflict between Portugal and Indonesia. Rather, it was a conflict between Indonesia and the international community and a rebellion against the Charter. Indonesia had earlier reiterated its opposition to the Committee's deliberations, saying that they constituted an unacceptable interference in its internal affairs.

In 1977, the General Assembly rejected an Indonesian claim that East Timor had been integrated into Indonesia, as the people of the territory had not freely exercised their right of self-determination. Portugal is the administering Power of East Timor.

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